

LOC Questions and Clarifications Memorandum

To: Solicited Vendors for Letter of Configuration (LOC) Number 38207, dated April 20, 2009 for the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

From: David L. Litchlitter

Date: April 24, 2009

Subject: Responses to Questions Submitted and Clarifications to Specifications

Contact Name: Sheila Kearney

Contact Phone Number: 601-359-2686

Contact E-mail Address: Sheila.Kearney@its.ms.gov

LOC Number 38207 is hereby amended as follows:

1. Specification 3, Procurement Project Schedule is being modified as follows:

Task	Date
Release of LOC	Monday, April 20, 2009
Deadline for Vendors' Written Questions	Wednesday, April 22, 2009 at 3:00 PM (Central Time)
Addendum with Vendors' Questions and Answers	Friday, April 24, 2009
Proposals Due	Thursday, May 7, 2009 at 3:00 PM (Central Time)
Proposal Evaluation/Interviews	Thursday, May 7, 2009 – Tuesday, May 12, 2009
Notification of Award	Tuesday, May 12, 2009
Contract Negotiations/Execution	Tuesday, May 12, 2009 – Friday, May 22, 2009
Awarded Work to Begin	Tuesday, May 26, 2009

2. The first sentence of Specification 11.1 is being modified to read as follows:
Vendor must deliver their response to Sheila Kearney at ITS by May 7, 2009, by 3:00 P.M. (Central Time).

3. **The first sentence of Specification 4.3 is being modified to read as follows:
The anticipated start date is Tuesday, May 26, 2009.**
4. **The first sentence of Specification 7.1 is being modified to read as follows:
Initial contract period will be from May 26, 2009 through December 8, 2009.**
5. **Specification 5.3.1.2 is being modified to read as follows:
5.3.1.2 Creation of dynamic XML templates to be rendered as HTML or PDF files**
6. **Specification 5.2.3.3 is being added to read as follows:
5.2.3.3 Experience with grant applications**
7. **Specification 5.3.3.1 is being added to read as follows:
5.3.3.1 Experience with grant applications**

The following questions were submitted to ITS and are being presented as they were submitted, except to remove any reference to a specific vendor. This information should assist you in formulating your response.

Question 1: Would the State consider extending the proposal due date to allow vendors more time to identify the appropriate resources and complete required forms?

Response: **The State will extend the proposal due date a week. Refer to Amendment Item # 1, Amendment Item # 2, Amendment Item # 3, and Amendment Item # 4 above for revised project dates.**

Question 2: Technician position: Is there any other software package than Cold Fusion that would be acceptable for this role or can this skill be omitted completely? That combined with the lifecycle experience make this position very difficult to source for. If not, are we able to work with sub-vendors on this requirement?

Response: **The State will not omit this requirement. Subcontractors may be proposed in response to this LOC.**

Question 3: Specification 2. This section identifies 1 Business Analyst and 2 to 3 technicians as the target for procurement for this LOC. Relative to this, is DFA seeking to hire all persons from the same Vendor or is there a possibility they may split the allocation? What will drive that final decision?

Response: **Specification 4.2 states that preference may be given to Vendor that can provide all individuals. The State will consider multiple awards if doing so would result in the lowest and best value for the State.**

Question 4: Section 4.5. Just to clarify, is the vendor and the assigned consultants expected to sign the Confidentiality Agreement, just the vendor, or just the assigned consultants? Please clarify.

Response: **The awarded Business Analyst and the Technicians will be required to sign Confidentiality Agreements.**

Question 5: Specifications 5.2.3.1 – 5.2.3.2. Is a consultant currently performing this service today? The statement on 5.2.3 states "...position may be given additional consideration for the following experience" what preference will these individuals be given in evaluation? Please clarify.

Response: **The State does not currently have a consultant performing this service. Points for specifications 5.2.3.1 and 5.2.3.2 will be awarded to individuals who have the experience described.**

Question 6: Specification 5.3.3.1. Is a consultant currently performing this service today? The statement on 5.3.3 states "...position may be given additional consideration for the following experience" what preference will these individuals be given in evaluation? Please clarify.

Response: **The State does not currently have a consultant performing this service. Points for specification 5.3.3.1 will be awarded to individuals who have the experience described.**

Question 7: Specification 6.3. The existing cost sheet does not provide a location for denoting a maximum annual percentage increase for an hourly rate for a second annual renewal. Where should this be included?

Response: **Vendor may either provide the cap in response to specification 6.3 or add it to the bottom of Attachment A.**

Question 8: Specification 2. When will DFA decide if they require 2 or 3 technicians? What will drive that decision?

Response: **The decision on the number of Technicians will be made at the conclusion of evaluation and indicated in the Notice of Award. DFA will consider cost and qualifications to ensure individuals with the appropriate skill sets are acquired to successfully accomplish the project's objectives.**

Question 9: Specification 7.1. Just to confirm, the initial contract period is 5/18/09 (target) to 11/30/09 as opposed to what is listed here with a cap of 1400 hours. Please confirm.

Response: The contract period is 5/26/09 through 12/08/09, which is 28 weeks. The hours cap is based upon each individual working 50 hours per week (28 weeks x 50 hours per week = 1,400 hours per individual).

Question 10: Specification 11.1. The statement reads, “Responses may be delivered by hand, via regular mail, overnight delivery, email or by fax”. What is the preference for receipt? Please clarify.

Response: The State does not have a preference on method of receipt.

Question 11: Specification 11.2. Just to confirm, DFA is seeking back in response to this LOC:

- The LOC with appropriate notations of agreed, acknowledged, exception and will comply for points 3 – 11
- Attachment A completed
- Completed proposal exception summary either with exceptions or noted as no exceptions
- Completed experience information and reference workbook for each Business Analyst and Technician submitted
- Resumes for each Business Analyst and Technician submitted
- Amended attachment C – standard professional services agreement to include Vendor detail

Please clarify if this is correct or anything is missing.

Response: The State confirms that the bulleted items are correct, but also wishes to clarify that any exceptions to Attachment C (Standard Professional Services Agreement) must also be indicated in Attachment B (Proposal Exception Summary Form).

Question 12: Specification 7. Please clarify that DFA will supply the necessary equipment onsite for the consultants to complete their work or will the consultants need to be equipped with their own computers.

Response: Consultants will be required to provide their own computer workstations.

Question 13: Specification 7.5. Please clarify the statement “awarded individual(s) shall be required to attend...” is that the vendor or the assigned consultant or both?

Response: The State requires awarded individuals (Business Analyst and Technicians) to attend standing, on-site meetings with DFA.

Question 14: How many Business Analysts and Technical Analysts in TOTAL are you seeking?

Response: As stated in the last two bullets of specification 2, the State is seeking one Business Analyst and two to three Technicians.

Question 15: Is this a renewal for an incumbent in place OR a complete NEW Position?

Response: **These are new positions.**

Question 16: How can any candidate have experience with Mississippi State Government who receive federal grants and sub-grant these funds to other entities OR Offices of Fiscal Management or Budget and Fund Management experience implementing systems to address MATA, FFATA, and ARRA requirements unless they have worked at the site in some capacity?

Response: **A candidate would only have experience with Mississippi State Government if he had any prior consulting relationships with State agencies. A candidate may have experience implementing systems to address MATA, FFATA, and ARRA if he had previous engagements with other States or the Federal Government.**

Question 17: Are you open to any individual who can do part on site and part off site work?

Response: **The State intends the work to be performed on site. As stated in specification 7.4, the awarded individual(s) may be allowed to work remotely when deemed appropriate by the State. All work completed remotely must be pre-approved by DFA.**

Question 18: Can you please describe your software/hardware environment in detail?

Response: **DFA currently has DB2 running under AIX and also applications running on Windows based servers. DFA will be acquiring the products described in this LOC and expects the awarded consultants to assist DFA in the configuration of these products.**

Question 19: Would the Consultant need to be on call or on beeper duty at any time?

Response: **It is not the State's intent for the awarded consultants to be on call.**

Question 20: Is the project initially for 6 months long for both the Technical and Business Analyst position? If yes, any chance of extension beyond the initial 6 month project duration?

Response: **As stated in specification 7.1 and in the Standard Agreement article 1.1, the State reserves the right, upon written agreement of the parties, to renew for an additional term, the length of which will be agreed upon by the parties.**

Question 21: Do you wish for us to provide the rate for year 2 and year 3 for the individual(s) proposed?

Response: As stated in specification 6.3, Vendor must commit to the proposed hourly rate for one year. Vendors must state the maximum annual percentage increase for their hourly rate, not to exceed 5% per state fiscal year. The percentage stated in Vendor's proposal will be used to calculate the cost for future years.

Question 22: Would any Travel be required? If yes, who pays for the cost?

Response: Costs incurred for the awarded consultants' travel to and from the work location specified in specification 7.2 must be factored into the fully-loaded hourly rate. If the consultants are required to travel to a location other than 7.2, travel costs will be provided by the State. The State does not anticipate any travel for these positions.

Question 23: If there is any training related to the project which is needed, who pays for the COST?

Response: The State expects the awarded consultants to have the requisite experience as described in specifications 5.2 and 5.3. As such, the State does not anticipate any training to be required for the consultants.

Question 24: Is there a budget or rate range already established for this position?

Response: DFA MMRS does not disclose project budget information.

Question 25: Any desired certification required?

Response: No certifications are required for the proposed consultants.

Question 26: What is a realistic start date for this project as we know of several previous positions where the project started almost 4-6 months from the RFQ origination date?

Response: As stated in specifications 3, 4.3, 6.13, and 7.1, the anticipated start date is May 26, 2009; for this start date to be possible, the State expects the awarded Vendor to negotiate a contract within 8 working days of the notice of award.

Question 27: Do the candidates need to have experience with GRANT APPLICATIONS?

Response: This specific experience was not listed in the experience requirements (5.2 and 5.3). The consultants will work with grant application subject matter experts as required to accomplish the work specified in this LOC. Additional consideration may be given to candidates who meet all LOC requirements and also have grant application experience. Refer to Amendment Item # 6 and Amendment Item # 7 above.

Question 28: How many individuals in TOTAL CAN WE SUBMIT for each of the position?

Response: As stated in specification 6.1, Vendor may propose no more than two individuals for the Business Analyst position and three individuals for the Technician positions.

Question 29: If we identify a candidate who has several years with DB2 or cold fusion but may not have version 8.0. Do the candidates submitted need to have 24 months experience in cold fusion 8.0 and 12 months in SQL (querying, DB2 version 8)? How can this make a difference unless you already have a candidate identified?

Response: No candidate has been identified. We are looking for the best combination of experience.

LOC responses are due May 7, 2009, at 3:00 p.m. (Central Time).

If you have any questions concerning the information above or if we can be of further assistance, please contact Sheila Kearney at 601-359-2686 or via email at Sheila.Kearney@its.ms.gov.

cc: File 38207